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LUKE 6, 43—49.

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Our lesson contains some of the concluding exhortations of the Sermon on the Mount and the conclusion proper in the form of a simple, but striking metaphor. In treating the text, it may be well to compare Matthew's version of the sermon, which is more complete than Luke's, although Luke furnishes some neat little touches that are wanting in Matthew. In Matthew the section regarding good and evil fruits has special reference to the pseudoprophets, and Chemnitz would apply it here to their erroneous teaching. "As the fruits of a Christian, in so far as he is a Christian, are good works, so of a prophet, in so far as he is a prophet, the fruits are *forma seu qualitas doctrinae*. And as by works as by their fruits it may be known whether men are true Christians or hypocrites, so by the fruits, that is, the nature of the doctrine, we may judge of true and false prophets. And to this interpretation the words of Luke clearly point: 'A good man out of the good *treasure*, etc.' All of which is a good practical application; but the retrospective γάρ shows that the direct application is to works (including words) and extends to all nominal Christians.

V. 46 forms the transition to the grand simile of the wise and foolish builders, with which the discourse concludes, and is introductory to it, exhorting men to *do* as well as to *hear* the words of the Son of God. In the latter part of the Sermon on the Mount we have the following pairs of contrasts: the wide and the narrow gate, the wide and the narrow way, the mote and the beam, the good and the evil tree, the good and the evil treasure, the wise and the foolish builder, three of which occur in our lesson.

Vv. 43. 44: "For there is not a good tree that produces bad fruit, nor, again, a bad tree that produces good fruit. For every tree is recognized by its own fruits. For from thorns they do not gather

figs nor from a bramble-bush [a bunch of] grapes." The γάρ links the verse with the foregoing. Its force is: He who, while suffering under his own beam, yet aims at extracting another's mote, is like a bad tree affecting to bring forth good fruit (*Bengel*). Or, whoso, in a spirit of malignity, mocks and maligns his neighbor on account of his faults and infirmities, reveals his malicious and poisonous frame of mind and proves by such fruits that he is not a good, but a bad tree, yea, a prickling thorn and bramble in the garden of the Church, a Christian falsely so called (*Weimar Bible*). The meaning is: Be sure that you are earnestly combating your own faults before you act as a judge of your neighbor's conduct. As long as you are not born again, you are incapable of any good works, not to speak of your attempting to correct others. To cause the image to sink deep into the understanding, it is repeated again and again. The οὐ δύναται is a very strong negation. In it lies the progressive force of the parable (*Meyer*). A good tree is one that is sound and healthy, and by reason of its intrinsic soundness it produces solid fruits, with sweet, wholesome juice. Σαπρός refers not to an inferior species, but to a tree of a given species whose sap, for some reason, has become bitter or defective. There are trees that have the appearance of being sound and healthy, but in reality they are not, and no amount of labor will improve them. A man had a pear-tree in his orchard known as the hypocrite, which attired itself in a charming garland of blossoms and was usually laden with a crop of bright and seemingly luscious yellow pears. But the pears were dry and tasteless when turning and mushy to the core as soon as they were ripe. Why do trees standing in the same plot of ground as others and enjoying like conditions of sunshine and moisture differ in the fruit they yield? The cause is not in the soil nor in the weather, but in the trees. Christ alludes to something that is a matter of general observation. A tree is to be judged solely by its fruits and is good or bad, sound or unsound, according to the grade of fruit that adorns its branches. Every one knows — and here is a turn of the metaphor — that one species of trees will not, under the best conditions of soil and weather, bring forth fruit of another species. Thorns will never be productive of figs nor brambles of grapes. Careful spraying will destroy scale and insects, pruning will limit or increase production as the owner wishes, cultivating will improve a good tree, but the species cannot be altered.

The parable is leveled directly against the self-righteous, who presume to make themselves acceptable to God by their good works and take pride in those natural virtues which a man with moral character can cultivate without undergoing a change of heart, and who in their pride act as teachers of others. Rom. 2, 17—23; Jer. 8, 6—8. Under a different figure and without setting forth the process doctrinally, Christ here teaches what He inculcated upon Nico-

demus, namely, the necessity of regeneration. He at once condemns self-righteousness in His allusion to the ugly thorn and bramble and seeks to draw men graciously to Himself and the better way by allusion to the much-prized vine and fig-tree. As thorns and brambles cannot produce figs and grapes, so men in their natural condition cannot do good works. With reference to the fig-tree and the vine Luther says: "The fig-tree is an unpretentious tree, does not boast and vaunt itself on account of its fruits and leaves, nor does it put forth its leaves until the fruit is present; in a twinkling, ere we know it, it bears its fruit. So likewise the grape-vine, which has no outward show or glory, therein differing from every other tree; it is nothing but a weak piece of wood, yet produces the sweetest grapes, fruit sweeter than that of any other tree. The other trees make a show of themselves with leaves and blossoms, so that you would think they were going to produce pure sugar; yet they yield nothing but bitter fruits, that have no value." (W. VII, 929.) So also the reference to the good and bad trees and their respective fruits is just another way of saying a man can do no good works until he has been converted to Christ. All unconverted people are meant by the bad tree and by the thorn and bramble, in particular people who feign Christianity, pretenders, hypocrites. You might teach such to observe the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount outwardly, but the trees will remain what they are. A man may be decent and upright in a moral sense and display a luxuriant overgrowth of leaves and flowers and of apparently good fruits without undergoing conversion, or spiritual renewal. The tree remains what it was, the thorn a thorn, the bramble a bramble. The unconverted, self-righteous, presuming *heart* is the bad tree. That tree cannot yield good fruit because it is defective; the person is still wholly corrupted because of his birth in sin. Ps. 51, 5. An unconverted man or woman cannot bring forth the fruits which it is the peculiar and sole prerogative of those to produce who have been rescued from the defilement of their birth in sin through the sacred work of regeneration. Eph. 2, 10; see 1 Pet. 14—23. The distinction made by a noted American educator between once-born men, those who have not been guilty of gross moral delinquency and need no second birth, and twice-born men, the licentious and drunkards, who are in need of a rebirth, is utterly set at naught by the teaching of our Lord.

The tendency of the metaphor, then, is to point out that a man must have within himself the *principle* of Christian piety, which is the gift and endowment of the new birth, ere he can do good works, and that faith must become the actuating principle within his heart if his works are to be of a nature to please God. But the new birth and faith are bestowed in the preaching of the Gospel. Christ died to redeem men from sin's retributive sentence and empower them to

contend against its tyranny and empire in the mortal body. 1 Pet. 2, 24. Believers become dead unto sin and alive unto God; and to this quickening into spiritual life is due what is known as piety, obedience, holiness, and good works. Faith in the vicarious death of Christ becomes the principle, in believers, of all piety, of all sincere acts of worship, of all duty and obedience to God and love to humanity, whereas before regeneration the principle of sin held dominion. The conception of sin as a fundamental principle in the unregenerate and of righteousness or faith as a fundamental principle of well-doing in the regenerate runs through Rom. 6, 7, and 8; comp. 6, 11—23; 7, 4—6; 8, 1—15. Moreover, the image of fruit-bearing is quite characteristic already of the Old Testament, Ps. 1; Jer. 17, 7; Is. 56, 3; Prov. 11, 28; 12, 12; and of the New, John 15; Rom. 6, 22; Phil. 1, 11; Col. 1, 10; Gal. 5, 22—26.

The Lord also furnishes a test by which we are able to determine whether professing disciples are believers or not. He says: "Every tree is known by its fruits." In many cases the test is infallible. Where the principle of piety or love to God dominates the heart, the professor of religion will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. Where the principle of selfishness and pride holds sway, the works of the flesh will be manifest. Entire religions and church-bodies may be judged by their fruits. Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Hinduism, have maintained a hold upon the nations of the East for centuries, and we need but survey those lands to learn how utterly false the religions are. The test may be applied to Antinomians and other baneful sects with the same results. But this test is infallible in the case of individuals only when their works are manifestly of the devil and are persisted in. Luther says only those who are spiritual can know men by their fruits. There is one fruit whereby you can know them, and that is unbelief. You can know them also by manifest sins; but the rule is misleading, for Christians also fall. "Therefore the true fruit by which they are known is an inward fruit, which to judge I must have the Spirit of God; for the eye of the flesh and reason can do nothing." (St. L., XI, 1401.) Sincere and counterfeit Christians are often so much alike in word and deed that we must exercise the greatest care lest in seeking to know men by their fruits we judge and condemn the righteous on account of their infirmities.

The test may be applied to the kind of works prescribed by any church-body or performed by nominal Christians. "No false doctrine or heresy ever sprang up but it had this mark of identification, that it prescribed *works not commanded by God*." (Luther, W. VII, 925.) The Savior gives His followers no evangelical counsels, He does not go beyond the Moral Law, nor does He lay down other works than those that fall under the sanction of the Decalog. So also the apostles,

in their admonitions to a life of piety and godliness, restate the commandments. But those whose hearts are not divinely illumined think the duties embraced under the Ten Words are too easy, so they fall upon self-chosen works, blindly supposing they can do more than God commanded, even works of supererogation. Such works of Romanists and legalists have a glamor that is deceiving. The Pharisee, with his voluntary fasts and his tithing of substance over and above what the Law prescribed, presents a far more attractive figure than the wretched publican smiting on his breast and pleading for mercy. So reason must be taken captive and the works of men subjected to the unerring canon of the Ten Commandments.

V. 45: "The good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good and the evil man out of the evil [treasure] the evil; for out of the abundance [fulness] of the heart the mouth speaks." The heart is the center of every man's life. It is involved in everything he says, thinks, or carries into action. Prov. 4, 23. In its natural condition it is desperately wicked, Jer. 17, 9; when regenerated by the Gospel, the Holy Spirit illuminates it with the knowledge of God, Heb. 8, 10. 11. This divine work wakes the consciousness of forgiveness and a love that renders the sinner willing and anxious to do the will of his Maker. The heart is likened to a field in which the Word is sown, to an abode where Christ and His Spirit dwell. 2 Cor. 1, 22. Here it is likened to a store-chamber. The treasures that enrich and enlarge the life of a believer, the graces that adorn his personality, are treasures stored in the heart. As often as he speaks or acts, he opens his store-chamber and brings forth that which is good, just as a householder fetches out gold or silver or bread and other sustenance for the household. Matt. 13, 52. Treasure must be stored from day to day, and if it consists of gold or precious stones, it must be carefully guarded. Then there will be a principal yielding interest. So by a right exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Christ's disciples store their hearts with spiritual treasures and by using them in their daily life increase their capital. Study and meditation on God's Word also increases the treasure. In like manner the wicked lay up evil treasure and bring forth from the store-chamber of the heart that which is evil. You cannot get out of the heart what is not put into it. The words and actions must first exist as solid bullion in the heart ere they can be used as current coin of the merchants. The consistent course of action in keeping with the Moral Law proves the true Christian. The works of the hypocrite are counterfeit money, glass jewels, contraband in the kingdom of saints, coins of false alloy, detected by the eye of the all-seeing God, which at length bring condemnation. Wherefore his hope is a spider-web. Job 27, 8; 8, 13; 20, 5.

The familiar saying: "Out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" is connected with the foregoing by another γάρ, indi-

cating that it proceeds from the thought there expressed. The heart being the store-chamber of all that stamps any one's individuality, the words are first mentioned since it is by them that he discloses his inner self. The image is that of a vessel filled to the top and effervescent, or running over. In the case of a wicked person the heart is like a vessel filled to the brim with corruption, which, like impure liquor in process of fermentation, straightway overflows with lies, flatteries, cursings, deceptions, and everything evil. Matt. 15, 19; Rom. 1, 29. 30; Jas. 3, 6. 8. In the case of the devout person, words proceed from the heart that are good for the use of edifying, seasoned with salt; hymns of praise, prayers, thanksgivings. See Prov. 12, 14; 17, 27; 18, 4; Jas. 1, 26; 3, 2. 9—12. The mouth is mentioned as the readiest agent in helping the heart to express itself. The truth is general. Indeed, a good man may sometimes use improper language and commit sins of the tongue, and a bad man may speak fair; but if we were able to observe another's words on all occasions, we should, in nearly every instance, be able to determine the color and character of his thoughts by what he utters publicly and privately.

V. 46: "But why do ye call Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say?" (as your Lord, to whom obedience is due—*Bengel*). This verse is the transition to the conclusion of the sermon. Hypocrites have the Lord's name in their mouths, they are voluble in their religious professions and loud and full of display, whereas believers are meek and quiet and often too modest in giving adequate expression to their religious convictions. But the very fact that the former do not do what the Lord commands them proves that they are not true disciples. The repetition of the word *Lord* shows the effusiveness of their outward devotion. Meyer says this term, by its use in the Church, came to be regarded as the summary of belief as it contained the full recognition of the majesty of Jesus' person. Certainly, by denominating him Lord, we acknowledge His divinity and also His right as supreme Lawgiver to prescribe all our moral and religious duties.

Vv. 47—49: "Every one who comes to Me and hears My words and does them, I will show you to whom he is like. He is like a man engaged in building a house, who dug, and went down deep and laid [his] foundation upon the [bed-]rock; and a flood having come (*γερουμένης*), the river dashed against that same house and was not able to shake it for the reason that it had been well built [marg.: its foundation had been laid upon the bed-rock]. But he that heard and did not do is like to a man who built a house upon the ground, without a foundation, against which the river dashed, and at once it fell together [in a heap], and the ruin of that house was terrible (*μέγα*)."
"Crescit oratio." The greatest sermon ever preached rises to a mighty, but quiet and simple climax in the shape of a "parable of warning,"

by which the Preacher clenches the doctrine and precepts so forcefully promulgated. "This is the conclusion and end of the matter upon which everything depends: he who not only hears this sermon with his ears, but does what is said, is a wise and prudent person. For the teaching is good and precious, yet it is not preached for the hearing merely, but in order that it may be done and put into practise." (Luther, W. VII, 954.)

The application begins with an authoritative "every one," embracing the whole human race, every one who comes within the sound of the message. Alford says: "This discourse was spoken to the disciples generally, to the twelve particularly, to the people prospectively; and its subject, both here and in Matthew, is *the state and duties of disciples of Christ*." No one, therefore, is exempted from Christ's word and admonition, no one dare exempt himself. The nobility and the commonalty, men of every class and station, are brought within the compass of Christ's authority by that bold "whoever." The Master says: Every one who *comes* to Me. The verb indicates the ardent desire and readiness with which men set themselves at Jesus' feet and become His hearers. There is a moral appeal in the teachings of Christ, not to speak of the spirit and power with which His words are clothed (Rom. 1, 16), and the divine authority with which He gives utterance to His message and demands obedience (Matt. 7, 28, 29), that has attracted multitudes, especially those who, like the rich young man, have made their mark in the higher ethics. Cp. Matt. 19, 20. But the ardent coming and hearing does not serve the whole turn. Every one who comes to Me and hears *μον τῶν λόγων*. The emphasis is on the *μον*, he that hears *My* words. His are not the words of a great teacher merely, but the words of the Son of God, the Lawgiver, who has the right to command and to require obedience. "My words"—the Sermon on the Mount is meant as embodying the Moral Law, including obedience to the several commandments, love to God and one's neighbor, the fulfilment of all devotional and practical duties, and submission to the cross and resignation under whatsoever evils and adversities are ordered by God (Beatitudes and Matt. 6, 1, 5, 16, 19, 25—34). But Christ speaks elsewhere in the gospels with the same unassailible authority and presses the duty of hearing Him or, at your peril, neglecting to hear Him. Indeed, the entire New Testament was written by fallible men, but dictated by the infallible Spirit, whom Christ promised to His disciples. John 14, 26; Luke 10, 16. Likewise the Old Testament was inspired by the Spirit of Christ, who moved and acted in the prophets, and therefore is the Word of Christ. 1 Pet. 1, 11. We are to hear, read, and study the entire Bible and accept it as the Word of the Son of God.

The sum and substance of the Scriptures is Jesus Christ and His vicarious sacrifice. To the Jews, who had the Old Testament, He

said: John 5, 39. Christ is the central personage and the atonement the central concept of the inspired Volume. And forasmuch as He died in our stead and made reconciliation for the sins of the people, Dan. 9, 24; 2 Cor. 5, 18, 19; Heb. 2, 17, His charge to sinners is to come to Him, to lay their sins on Him, to believe in Him, to accept Him as their dear Savior, Matt. 11, 28. To those who wished to know what works they were to do to please God, Jesus replied: John 6, 29, and in chap. 5, 24 hearing and believing are placed together. We are to hear and learn the Scriptures that we may understand the way of salvation. But faith without works is dead. Therefore He says: whoever comes and hears and *does* My words. Faith is the cardinal requirement of Scripture. But faith is fruitful in good works. Hearing and doing are placed in juxtaposition; for where hearing produces faith, there follows also obedience. Jas. 1, 22. The Sermon on the Mount is composed chiefly of law and precepts. In its lofty utterances the Savior speaks to those who are His disciples indeed, and He tells them how they are to live and warns them against the sins that beset God's children. Their faith is to become manifest by their good works. The Sermon on the Mount cannot be isolated from the Scriptural doctrines concerning Christ's person and atoning work. Only those who have faith in the Lamb and believe in His suretyship can fulfil the duties of the Moral Law herein set forth.

The person who reduces to practise what he hears Christ likens to a man who was building a house in which to live and, instead of letting well enough alone when he failed to strike the rock three or four feet under the surface, thrust mattock and spade deeper into the ground and kept on digging and excavating until he struck *τὴν πέτραν*, that is, the bed-rock. The digging, if it should represent anything, may be taken as characteristic of the man whose heart has experienced the curse of sin and is sincere in his repentance. Such a person is not satisfied with human consolations, he does not rely on his feelings, nor does he hope for any favor from God on account of his good works, but goes down until he strikes the Rock of Ages and lays the foundation of his religious life upon Christ and His merits. His attitude of heart is expressed in the beautiful hymn "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less than Jesus' Blood and Righteousness," every stanza of which may be applied to the text in hand. Therein lies the strength of the simile that he eschewed human trusts and confidences and trusted solely in Christ for pardon and reconciliation with the Father, not only believing in the Substitute for sinners, but proving his faith by holiness of heart and life and uprightness of conversation. In Matthew the description is made even more graphic by the contrasted adjectives "wise" and "foolish." It is not a question whether a man is good or bad, but whether he is wise or foolish. Christ is the Foundation, the Rock. Cp. 1 Cor. 3, 11; 10, 4. He only is a wise man

who builds upon that one Foundation. The best moral men in the world are utterly foolish if they disdain to build upon the merits of Christ. "The house is the general fabric of man's outward religious life" (*Elicott*). It is his Christian profession and life, the seeking of the truest and highest form of happiness here and the expectation of everlasting blessedness hereafter. St. Augustine says: "Though man has lost his happiness, yet he has not lost his desire for happiness," and it is because they realize how closely happiness is interrelated with religion that so many profess the latter. Yet only those who build upon the right foundation will find true happiness and blessedness here and hereafter. It pays a Christian to build upon Christ daily with childlike reliance. For when this man had completed the structure he had planned, lo, heavy rains brought the waters up to flood stage and with great fury the river dashed its waters against the house. (Cp. Matthew's account.) The floods alluded to may be either those of the sea or of a river. The fury of the elements conspiring against the builder represents the sufferings of this present time, the troops of adversities that overtake an upright Job and an erring David; temptations to sin and worldliness, also persecutions. The severest temptations are from the devil as touching our salvation. He would have us despair in our sins, he would keep us away from the means of grace; and when our faith weakens, he argues that the severe sufferings which are visited upon us are proof of God's having forsaken us. But there are many other adversities, such as sickness, bereavement, loss of work, reverses in business, when deep calls unto deep and the Christian cries out: "All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me." Ps. 42, 7; 88, 7; 69, 1. 2. The wisdom of the man who builds his house of faith upon the Bed-rock, Christ, becomes evident when the floods of adversity sweep down upon him; for in spite of their terrific fury they are not able to overthrow the building. "With this simile," says Luther, "Christ would earnestly warn us to take heed and hold fast His teaching and not suffer Him to slip away out of our hearts as our sole and certain Foundation and Corner-stone of our deliverance and salvation, as Paul calls Him, Rom. 9, 33; 1 Pet. 2, 6; from Is. 28, 16. If we stand grounded and built thereon, we shall no doubt remain unmoved and not care though the world and the devil with all false prophets and fanatics and all kinds of peril and suffering sweep down and storm upon us. With those who trust in their works there is none of this security, but they simply have nothing on which to hold; they feel that they are standing on loose and moving sand."

But the foolish builder built his house upon the ground (Matthew, "sand") without a foundation. "Shifting inclinations, short-lived appetites, transitory aims, varying judgments, of men, the fashions of the day in morality, the changing judgments of our own

consciences — these are the things on which men build if they are not building upon Jesus Christ" (*Maclarens*). The foolish builder is he who has never experienced repentance and faith and, disdaining Christ, adopts a religion of his own choosing, a religion of works, of course, and builds upon himself. Modernism has its genuine portrait drawn here by a facile stroke of the inerrant Teacher. They say there is nothing in the Bible but the Sermon on the Mount, and so they build their religious lives and their hopes for eternity upon those works which they attempt to do in compliance with its precepts, at the same time repudiating Christ's deity, His atonement, the efficacy of the Sacraments, in fact, everything that is fundamental. Such people may be men of culture and learning, but they are foolish builders withal. For the winds and tempests and floods sweep down upon the fabric of their making, and down it goes with a crash, beams and rafters, roof and floor and ceiling, with rare works of art and culture stored within, humanism, philanthropy, hedonism, and with its ornate and attractive exterior. There is one mighty crash, and the tenant lies there crushed beneath the wreckage of the house he fondly built without foundation upon the unstable sand or upon the earth. A religion based upon works or self-reliance will not fortify its professor against present adversity (witness infidelity, skepticism, and suicide as the terrible fruits of such religions), nor will a religion that repudiates the God who has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ carry its votaries safely through the floods of death and sustain them in the Last Judgment. But the metaphor must retain its general application to all without exception who do not build upon Christ, whether they be cultured literati, people of the middle class, or men of the baser sort. "They build upon the earth without foundation who are earthly-minded, Phil. 3, 19, who cleave with their hearts to temporal things, and do not firmly ground themselves by true faith on God's Word; hence they cannot stand in adversity, Prov. 14, 32; Ps. 73, 18" (*Weimar Bible*). Cp. Prov. 12, 7; Ezek. 13, 11; 1 Cor. 3, 11 ff. The destiny of all such is eternal punishment.

Hints for the homiletic treatment of the text. Like many of the lessons appointed to be read in the church, the text in hand was hardly intended to be covered in a single sermon, except perhaps by the exegetical method. But if one wishes to cover it synthetically, he might do so by selecting a general theme like the following: *Why Professing Christians should Be Fruitful in Good Works.* 1. Only those who are fruitful in good works have saving faith. 2. Only those who do the works commanded by Christ will endure temptation and stand in the Judgment.—*The Difference between Nominal and Real Christians*, as exemplified, 1. by the two kinds of trees, 2. by the two kinds of treasures, 3. by the two kinds of builders.—*That Hypocrites Differ*

from True Christians. 1. In the motive, or principle, impelling them to good works. Whereas hypocrites are still in their natural condition and perform good works from the selfish principle that is characteristic of the unregenerate, Christians are born again and are impelled to good works by childlike love of their Father. 2. In the frame of their hearts. Whereas the unregenerate hearts of hypocrites put forth evil in thought, word, and deed, the hearts of true Christians have been renewed by the Gospel and are like store-chambers from which good proceeds. 3. In the manner in which they build their hopes for eternity. Whereas hypocrites repudiate Christ and build upon their works, the true Christians build upon Christ, the sole Foundation.—

The Fatal Dangers of Hypocrisy. 1. The works of hypocrites are often so like those of the believers that the former are liable to deceive themselves. 2. Since they do not build the house of their confidence upon the Rock of Ages, they will be overthrown by the floods of adversity and lost forever.—The following themes would cover the first portion of the text: *Of Faith as a Principle of Holiness and Rectitude in Believers.* 1. Faith furnishes the only right motive to holiness and rectitude. 2. It is the one and only source of good works.—*That a Man Must Undergo a Change of Heart ere He can Do Good Works.* 1. Owing to original sin, he is incapable of any good thing in his natural condition. 2. After a change of heart has taken place in conversion, his works are sanctified by faith.—*The Heart of a Christian a Treasury, or Store-Chamber, of Good.* 1. How it is stored with good treasure. 2. How the treasure is laid out in the service of God and man. 3. How it may be increased.—*The Heart a Store-Chamber,* from which 1. the good man brings forth that which is good, 2. the bad man brings forth that which is evil.—*Every Tree is Known by Its Fruits.* 1. How important this truth is in regard to entire religions and church-bodies. 2. How important it is with reference to individuals.—The leading thought of the closing simile is the two kinds of hearers and the truth that only those build securely who do Christ's Word, who ground their hope of salvation upon Christ and what He has done for them.—*The Savior's Complaint, "Why Call Ye Me Lord?" etc.* 1. This complaint is justified in view of the indifference of nominal Christians toward holy living and well-doing. 2. Wise and blessed the Christians who are prompted by it to build more firmly upon Christ, the Rock of Ages, by doing what He has commanded.—*Church-members, Are You Building the House of Your Confidence upon the Unstable Earth or upon the Rock of Ages?* 1. If upon the unstable earth, your house will come down, and you will be forever lost. 2. If upon the Rock of Ages, you will remain steadfast amid temptations and be kept by the power of God unto salvation.

Predigt über die Epistel am elften Sonntag nach Trinitatis.

1 Ror. 15, 1—10.

Geliebte in dem Herrn!

Der Schreiber unserer heutigen Epistel sagt zu Anfang seines Briefes an die Römer: „Paulus, ein Knecht Jesu Christi, berufen zum Apostel, ausgesondert, zu predigen das Evangelium Gottes.“ Unter allen Menschen, die je gelebt haben, sind wenige, die einen größeren Einfluß ausgeübt und größere Gaben gehabt haben als eben dieses ausgewählte Rüstzeug Gottes. Wenn er aber angeben will, wer er sei und was seine Arbeit sei, dann weiß er nichts Höheres anzugeben, als daß er ein Knecht Jesu Christi sei und daß Gott ihn zum Apostel berufen habe. Und als Apostel Jesu Christi habe er die Aufgabe, das Evangelium Jesu Christi zu predigen. Und in demselben Kapitel schreibt er dann nochmals: „Ich schäme mich des Evangelii von Christo nicht; denn es ist eine Kraft Gottes, die da selig macht alle, die daran glauben.“

Von diesem Evangelium redet der Apostel auch in der heutigen Epistel. Er beginnt sie mit den Worten: „Ich erinnere euch aber, liebe Brüder, des Evangelii, das ich euch verkündiget habe.“ Vom Evangelium will er also reden; er will es auffrischen in ihrem Herzen. An dieser Stelle hebt er aber dann die Herrlichkeit und die Zuverlässigkeit des Evangeliums hervor und erinnert daran, daß wir diesem herrlichen Evangelium mit Leib und Seele dienen sollen. Das muß denn auch der Gegenstand sein, auf den wir unsere Aufmerksamkeit richten. Der Gegenstand unserer Betrachtung sei daher:

Des Apostels Erinnerung an das Evangelium:

1. an den Segen, den es gebracht hat;
2. an dessen unerschütterliche Gewißheit;
3. an den Dienst, den wir demselben schuldig sind.

1.

„Ich erinnere euch aber, liebe Brüder, des Evangelii, das ich euch verkündiget habe, welches ihr auch angenommen habt, in welchem ihr auch stehet, durch welches ihr auch selig werdet, welcher Gestalt ich es euch verkündigt habe, so ihr's behalten habt, es wäre denn, daß ihr's umsonst geglaubt hättest.“ Erinnern will Paulus die Korinther an das Evangelium, das er ihnen verkündigt hatte. Erinnern kann man einen nur an das, was er kennt und weiß oder gekannt und gewußt hat. An das Evangelium erinnert der Apostel die korinthischen Christen. Die Korinther kannten also das Evangelium und kannten es noch. Denn man erinnert an eine Sache nicht bloß, wenn es in Vergessenheit geraten ist, sondern auch zu dem Zweck, daß es nicht vergessen werde und man den rechten Gebrauch davon mache. So war es hier mit dem Evangelium. Die Korinther hatten das Evangelium empfangen und hatten es noch. Paulus selbst war es gewesen, der es ihnen gebracht hatte, wie

er ja hier sagt: „welches ich euch verkündiget habe“. Paulus bezieht auf sich selbst die Verbindung mit dem Evangelium. Es ist ihm eine Sache, die ihn eng angeht. Er bringt das Evangelium auch in enge Berührung mit denen, die er daran erinnert. Es muß eine persönliche Sache sein, wenn eine Erinnerung wirklich Frucht bringen soll. Beide Teile müssen einen lebendigen Anteil an der Sache haben. Und wenn dann beide auch bisher zusammen gewirkt haben, dann ist die Erinnerung doppelt wirksam. Niemand kann so wirksam an eine Lehre erinnern als der, welcher selbst die Lehre gegeben hat; niemanden hört man so gern erinnern als den Lehrer, von dem man gelernt hat. Das traf hier zusammen. Paulus war der Lehrer des Evangeliums gewesen und er war es, der jetzt auch daran erinnerte. Und die Leute, die er daran erinnerte, waren auch erst seine Schüler gewesen. Sie hatten von ihm gelernt und wurden jetzt von ihm erinnert. Sie hatten die Sache gemeinsam durchlebt, hatten gemeinsam die erste Freude erlebt und sollten nun dieselbe Freude wieder gemeinsam genießen. Das sollte ihnen doppelt lieb sein.

Das findet ja bei uns auch Anwendung. Ich bin lange genug bei euch gewesen, daß ihr wohl der Mehrzahl nach von mir gelernt habt, wenn auch nicht dem Anfange nach, so doch bei dem fortgehenden Lernen, und so habe ich auch die Freude gehabt, euch zu lehren und mit euch zu lernen. Gemeinsam wollen wir uns denn nun auch freuen, wenn wir uns erinnern an das Evangelium, das wir zusammen gelehrt und gelernt haben.

Nun schreibt Paulus: „Ich erinnere euch des Evangelii, welches ich euch verkündigt habe.“ Gedenkt an das, was ich euch gebracht habe. Damals ließt ihr ja zu den stummen Götzen, wie ihr geführt wurdet. Damals kanntet ihr nichts Höheres als die toten Bilder, und die hieltet ihr für Götter; die fürchtetet ihr. Ihr hattet wegen eurer Sünden Angst vor Gott und dachtet: Gott muß uns verdammen. Und so war es auch. Ihr lagt unter Gottes Born, und die Sünde zog euch immer tiefer ins Verderben. An Leib und Seele sankt ihr ins Verderben wie eure Väter vor euch. Keine Hilfe, keine Rettung war zu finden, weder bei Menschen noch bei den Götzen. Da kam ich zu euch. Ich kam nicht mit Worten hoher menschlicher Weisheit. Ich kam mit dem Evangelium Jesu Christi, das von der Welt her verschwiegen gewesen war, nun aber offenbart worden ist durch den Geist Gottes zu eurer Seligkeit. Erinnert euch dessen, was ich euch damals lehrte. Ich lehrte euch, daß nur ein Gott sei und daß dieser eine Gott sich in drei Personen offenbart hat, Vater, Sohn und Heiligem Geist. Ich sagte euch, daß Gott allerdings heilig ist und alle Sünden haßt und mit ewigem Feuer straft; aber derselbe Gott ist auch so gnädig und harmherzig, daß er seinen eingeborenen Sohn hergegeben hat, damit er der Heiland der Welt werden solle. Ich habe euch erzählt, wie der Sohn Gottes ein Mensch geworden ist, wie er für die Menschen die Gebote Gottes, die sie nicht halten konn-

ten, erfüllt und dann sogar sein Leben für sie gelassen hat. Und weil das die Erfüllung des göttlichen Gesetzes für die Menschen war, darum ist Gott mit den Menschen ausgesöhnt. Er hat allen Menschen alle Sünden verziehen. Und eben das hat Gott den Menschen auch kundgetan, und ich sagte euch, daß eben ich berufen sei zu einem Apostel Jesu Christo, zu predigen das Evangelium von Jesu Christo. Ich sagte euch: Dies ist eben das Evangelium. Und wie habt ihr euch damals gefreut, als ihr dies Evangelium hörtet! Erinnert euch daran, ruft euch das ins Gedächtnis zurück! So sagte Paulus. So sage auch ich zu euch. Erinnert euch an den Unterricht in der Biblischen Geschichte und im Katechismus in Schule und Konfirmandenunterricht. Erinnert euch an das Bekennen bei eurer Konfirmation. War das nicht eine Freude? Dann auch später: Wie lieblich schmeckte euch diese oder jene Predigt, wenn euch um Trost hange war! Da habt ihr Gott gedankt, daß ihr das Evangelium gehört habt! Denkt heute daran! Erinnern wir uns beiderseits daran, welche Freude es für mich war, daß ich euch dieses Evangelium predigen, welche Freude für euch, daß ihr es hören durftet! Eine solche Erinnerung wird gewiß dazu dienen, daß wir das Evangelium wieder hochschäzen.

Weiter erinnert Paulus seine Zuhörer: „welches ihr auch angenommen habt“. Nicht bloß habt ihr das Evangelium gehört, sondern ihr habt es auch angenommen. Ihr habt es geglaubt. Ihr habt es als göttliche Wahrheit erkannt und euch desselben gefreut und getrostet. Ihr habt euch darüber gefreut und Gott herzlich dafür gedankt, daß er euch alle Sünden vergeben und euch zum ewigen Leben angenommen hat. War das eine Freude und ein seliges Empfinden! Das zeugt von der Kraft des Evangeliums. Denn so sehr auch der Mensch von Natur im Elend liegt, so empfindet er es doch nicht, sondern hält sich für gerecht vor Gott, indem er auf seine guten Werke baut. So sehr er zu anderer Zeit des Trostes bedarf, so kann er ihn doch nicht finden im Evangelium. Denn der natürliche Mensch vernimmt nicht, was des Geistes Gottes ist; es ist ihm eine Torheit, und er kann es nicht erkennen, denn es muß geistlich gerichtet sein. „Wir gingen alle in der Irre, wie Schafe; ein jeglicher sah auf seinen Weg.“ Und dennoch habt ihr das Evangelium damals angenommen. Ihr habt euch losgemacht vom Vertrauen auf die Göthen und habt euch gewendet zu dem lebendigen Gott. Das war nicht euer Tun; das hat Gott getan durch das Evangelium, das ich euch verkündigt habe. Wenn ihr zurückdenkt, dann müßt ihr das erkennen.

Das war auch bei euch, Geliebte, so. Ihr habt doch alle diese Jahre nicht Heuchelei getrieben. Ihr seid doch nicht dem bloßen Schall der Worte des Evangeliums gefolgt. Ihr habt das Evangelium angenommen in wahren Herzenglauben. So viele Menschen waren klüger als ihr, haben vielleicht auch vom Evangelium mehr gewußt als ihr, haben auch ein ehrbares Leben geführt; sie sind aber nicht dazu gekommen, das Evangelium anzunehmen. Ihr habt es angenommen. Das ist Gnade. Das ist die unüberwindliche Kraft des Evangeliums.

Weiter erinnert Paulus die Korinther: „in welchem ihr auch stehtet“. Sie hatten nicht bloß einmal das Evangelium im Glauben angenommen, sondern sie standen jetzt darin. Sie hatten den Glauben bewahrt bis auf jene Stunde. Nicht bei allen war es so gewesen. Die Galater z. B. hatten Christum wieder verloren und waren auf das Gesetz verfallen. Auch in Korinth waren Leute in Sünde und Schande gefallen; manche glaubten nicht an eine Auferstehung des Fleisches, gingen wieder zu den Götern, haderten miteinander vor Gericht und dergleichen. Aber das war diesen Leuten nicht widerfahren. Sie standen noch im Glauben. Auch das zeugte von der Kraft des Evangeliums. Denn durch das Evangelium waren sie erhalten worden.

Das gilt auch von uns allen, die wir heute im Glauben stehen. Viele von denen, die hier das Evangelium gehört haben, sind wieder abgefallen; viele auch von denen, die denselben Unterricht empfangen und einst im selben Glauben gestanden haben wie ihr. Sie sind gefallen, wir sind erhalten worden. Gedenken wir heute daran und preisen die Kraft des Wortes, das uns erhalten hat!

Und an noch eins erinnert Paulus: „durch welches ihr auch selig werdet“. Paulus schaut im Geiste in die Zukunft und sagt, was geschehen wird. Ihr werdet selig werden, sagt er. Ihr kommt in den Himmel und erlangt die ewige Seligkeit. Das tut das Evangelium; denn es ist eine Kraft Gottes, die da selig macht alle, die daran glauben.

Daran seiet auch ihr heute erinnert. Nicht nur habt ihr jetzt den Glauben, sondern ihr sollt ihn auch behalten. Ihr hofft nicht bloß in diesem Leben auf Christum, sondern eure Christenhoffnung ist auf die Ewigkeit gerichtet. Ja, ihr werdet selig werden. Welche Kraft übt also das Evangelium aus!

Dass dies alles dem Evangelium zu verdanken sei, betont der Apostel noch besonderz; er sagt: „durch welches ihr auch selig werdet, welcher Gestalt ich es euch verkündiget habe“. Also das Evangelium, gerade so, gerade in der Gestalt, wie ich es euch verkündigt habe, das hat's getan und wird auch das übrige noch tun. Die Wirkung des Evangeliums war zu gewaltig, als dass jemand sie ganz hätte leugnen können. So kamen denn die Irrlehrer, die Diener des Teufels, und sprachen: Ja, ja, das Evangelium muß es zwar tun, aber man muß es nicht immer in der alten Gestalt haben; man muß es den Zeiten und Leuten anpassen; es in immer neuen Formen bringen. Paulus war manchen zu altmodisch, zu steif; das Evangelium muß umgemodelt werden nach dem Geschmack der Leute. Aber Paulus bestreht darauf: Nein, in der Gestalt, wie ich es euch verkündigt habe, übt das Evangelium seine Wunderwirkung aus. Es bedarf nicht neuer Formen. Im Briefe an die Galater schreibt er denn auch ganz scharf: „So jemand euch Evangelium predigt anders, denn das ihr empfangen habt, der sei verflucht!“ Wenn den Leuten das Evangelium in seiner alten Gestalt nicht mehr zusagt, dann sind sie des Evangeliums satt. Es handelt sich

nicht um eine neue Einkleidung des Evangeliums, sondern man will ein ander Evangelium haben, „so doch kein anderes ist“.

Merken wir uns das auch! Gerade in unserer Zeit besonders, da wir aus einer Sprache in eine andere übergehen, droht uns eine Gefahr. Man redet da auch von Altmodischsein und von einer Einkleidung des Evangeliums in neue Gewänder, von einer Anpassung des Evangeliums an die Leute und in die Zeitverhältnisse. Das darf nie den Sinn haben, daß das Evangelium in irgendeiner Weise geändert werde nach Inhalt und Zweck. Das Evangelium macht selig in der Gestalt, in welcher Paulus es gepredigt, in welcher Luther es verkündigt hat, in welcher unsere Eltern und wir selbst es bisher gehört und gelehrt haben. In dieser Wahrheit liegt die Ermahnung: Seht zu, daß wir das Evangelium behalten in der Gestalt, in der wir es empfangen und bisher gehabt haben! Müssen wir gleich eine andere Sprache bei Verkündigung des Evangeliums anwenden, das Evangelium selbst muß bleiben, wie es gewesen ist von alters her. In seiner ureigenen Gestalt — und nur in dieser — ist es eine Kraft Gottes, die da selig macht alle, die daran glauben.

In dieser Erkenntnis werden wir noch gestärkt werden, wenn wir zweitens die unerschütterliche Gewißheit des Evangeliums erwägen.

2.

Zunächst schreibt der Apostel: „Denn ich habe euch zuvörderst gegeben, welches ich auch empfangen habe.“ Paulus hat das Evangelium nicht erfunden; er hat es auch nicht von Menschen oder durch Menschen empfangen. Er betont: „Ich habe es von dem Herrn empfangen.“ Er hat geredet, nicht mit Worten, welche menschliche Weisheit lehren kann, sondern mit Worten, die der Heilige Geist lehrt. Inhalt und Worte des Evangeliums sind von Gott, und deshalb ist es die göttliche Wahrheit und unerschütterlich gewiß.

Dann gibt der Apostel die kurze Summa des Evangeliums an: „daß Christus gestorben sei für unsere Sünden nach der Schrift“. Christus ist der Inhalt des Evangeliums, wie es denn auch genannt wird das Evangelium Christi; es ist das Evangelium von dem gefreuzigten Christo. Christus ist gefreuzigt worden und am Kreuz gestorben und das ist geschehen für unsere Sünden. Unsere Sünden waren die Ursache seines Todes; unsere Sünden wurden auf ihn gelegt und ihm zugerechnet. Das ist der Grund, warum Christus gestorben ist. Aber sein Tod hat eine herrliche Wirkung gehabt; durch seinen Tod sind unsere Sünden gesühnt und getilgt worden. Er hat dadurch Vergebung der Sünden für uns erworben. Unsere Sünde ist nun weggenommen. Das ist geschehen „nach der Schrift“. Nach dem Alten und Neuen Testamente ist das so. Das Alte Testament hat es so zuvor verkündigt, und das Neue bringt die Erfüllung der Verheißung. Die Zeit erlaubt es nicht, daß ich die Schriftstellen heute einzeln dafür anführe. Das ist aus andern Predigten, namentlich aus den Passionspredigten, bekannt. Auch Paulus

begnügt sich hier mit einer allgemeinen Aussage, ohne einzelne Stellen anzuführen.

Weiter sagt er dann: „dass Christus begraben sei nach der Schrift“. Christi Begräbnis ist die letzte Stufe seiner Erniedrigung; es liefert den Beweis dafür, dass Christus wahrhaftig gestorben ist und den letzten Sold der Sünde empfangen hat. Und Paulus deutet das Begräbnis also: „Wisset ihr nicht, dass alle, die wir in Jesum Christum getauft sind, die sind in seinen Tod getauft?“ Durch Christi Leiden und Sterben sind unsere Sünden völlig abgetan und mit ihm in das Grab gelegt, so dass sie vor Gott nicht mehr vorhanden sind. Sein Tod wird uns so angerechnet, dass wir nicht mehr des ewigen Todes sterben müssen.

Endlich sagt das Evangelium, dass Christus auferstanden sei am dritten Tage „nach der Schrift“. Die Auferweckung Christi ist das Urteil Gottes über sein Werk, besonders über seinen Tod. Damit, dass Gott Christum vom Tode auferweckt hat, hat er erklärt, dass keine Schuld mehr auf ihm liege und dass er mit seinem Erlösungswerk völlig zufrieden sei. Und das gilt nicht bloß für seine Person, sondern für alle Menschen. Paulus sagt daher, Christus sei für unsere Sünde dahingegessen und um unserer Gerechtigkeit willen wieder auferweckt worden. Seine Auferweckung ist unsere Gerechterklärung. Dreimal betont es Paulus, dass er das Evangelium gepredigt habe „nach der Schrift“; die Schrift ist die Bürgschaft für die Wahrheit seiner Predigt. Erst hatte er gesagt, er habe das Evangelium vom Herrn direkt empfangen. Das machte ihn gewiss. Aber dieselbe Angabe könnten auch andere machen, und wir andern könnten nicht wissen, ob das auch wahr sei. Deshalb hat Gott sein Evangelium durch die heiligen Schreiber aufzeichnen lassen. Damit kann sich jeder Prediger ausweisen, und aus der Schrift können alle Hörer erkennen, ob die Prediger mit der Wahrheit umgehen.

Vor allem kommt es nun auf die Auferstehung Christi an. Durch dieselbe ist die Erlösung gewiss gemacht und das Evangelium versiegelt. Darum führt der Apostel weiter die Beweise für die Auferstehung Christi an. In den Ostertagen wird alle Jahre die Geschichte der Auferstehung Christi ausführlich erzählt; deshalb wollen wir heute nicht tiefer auf Einzelheiten eingehen. Wir lesen nur kurz den Bericht des Apostels und heben einzelnes daraus hervor. Der Bericht ist dieser: „Er ist gesehen worden von Kephas, danach von den Zwölf. Danach ist er gesehen worden von mehr denn fünfhundert Brüdern auf einmal, deren noch viel leben, etliche aber sind entschlafen. Danach ist er gesehen worden von Jakobo, danach von allen Aposteln.“ Das der Bericht. Dazu sagen wir: Eine Tatsache, die von so vielen bezeugt ist, ist gewiss glaubwürdig, wenn man überhaupt etwas glauben kann, was durch Menschen bezeugt wird. Dazu kommt, dass die Offenbarungen auf so verschiedene Weise geschehen sind, dass eine Täuschung kaum möglich wäre.

Zuletzt sagt der demütige Paulus: „Am letzten nach allen ist er auch von mir, als einer unzeitigen Geburt, gesehen worden; denn ich bin der geringste unter den Aposteln, als der ich nicht wert bin, daß ich ein Apostel heiße, darum daß ich die Gemeinde Gottes verfolget habe.“ Paulus hat Jesum besonders gesehen in seiner Herrlichkeit. Er war einer der heftigsten Gegner Christi, einer der hartnäckigsten Ungläubigen. Aber die Beweise für Christi Auferstehung waren zu stark. Er mußte sie zugeben, und nun glaubte er die Bedeutung derselben und predigte sie so gewaltig wie wenige. Er nennt sich den geringsten unter den Aposteln, aber nicht in dem Sinne, als ob sein Zeugnis weniger glaubwürdig wäre. Gerade sein Zeugnis wird durch seine vorige Stellung zu Christo desto kräftiger. Es ist nur seine Bescheidenheit, daß er so von sich selbst redet; er denkt dabei an seine Versündigungen, aber sein Zeugnis hält er für wichtig, ja für den Schlüßstein in der Offenbarung des Auferstandenen. An die Gewißheit der Wahrheit des Evangeliums erinnert Paulus, damit wir alle desto fester an das Evangelium glauben. Gott gebe, daß die Erinnerung nicht vergeblich sei!

Wir hören noch drittens, daß wir erinnert werden an das Evangelium, damit wir an den Dienst gedenken, den wir dem Evangelium schuldig sind.

3.

Paulus sagt darüber: „Aber von Gottes Gnaden bin ich, das ich bin“ usw. Das Evangelium von Christo machte Paulus zu einer persönlichen Sache. Wie er das Evangelium hörte und glaubte, so stellte er sich in den Dienst desselben. Er arbeitete für das Evangelium mit Predigen, Fasten, Opfern, Leiden und Bekennen. Und er hat mehr getan als andere Apostel, Petrus, Johannes, Jakobus. Gott hat mehr durch ihn ausgerichtet als durch andere. Alle Ehre aber weist er ab: „Nicht aber ich, sondern Gottes Gnade, die mit mir ist.“

Daran erinnere ich euch heute: Nicht bloß Apostel und Prediger sollen arbeiten, sondern alle, gerade auch die, welche schwer gesündigt hatten, ja gerade sie. Gerade sie haben Herzenserfahrung, und ihr Zeugnis ist kräftig. Also arbeite! Wie? Persönlich, durch andere, durch Wandel, durch Gaben für das künstliche Werk der Mission. Amen.

D. Lübbe.

Outlines on the Standard Epistle-Lessons.

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

1 COR. 15, 1—10 (3. 4).

The word *gospel*, meaning glad tidings, is one of the most important words in the Christian religion. Jesus, the Author and Subject of the Gospel, predicted that it would be preached in all the world. Matt. 24, 14; cp. Mark 16, 15. In the last book of the Bible it is called “the everlasting [eternal] Gospel.” Rev. 14, 6.—These facts

certainly make us eager to know what the Gospel really is, what its origin is, and what evidence we have of its genuineness and reliability. Our text, v. 3, invites us to consider prayerfully —

THE GOSPEL.

1. *Its primary principles;* 2. *Its origin;* 3. *Its firm foundation.*

1.

The word *gospel* literally means simply good news, but we are speaking of the Gospel of Christ. There is but *one*, although there are many perversions of the genuine Gospel. Gal. 1, 6—9. Stated in its simplest terms, what is the Gospel which we are preaching and which you accept? What are its *primary principles*?

St. Paul, the messenger of the Gospel to the Gentiles, declares with unmistakable simplicity: v. 3.

The Gospel, then, reveals unto us three preeminent *facts*: Christ died, was buried, was raised — lit., has been raised — on the third day. — Christ *died*. This fact was witnessed by thousands; in Paul's day it had never been denied by friend or foe; it was not called into question by the Corinthians, to whom Paul is writing this reminder of the Gospel he preaches. Christ was *buried*. This, too, is a historical fact, which those accept who believe that Christ died. Christ was *raised again* on the third day. Was He? This literal, historical, objective fact the Corinthians were inclined to doubt under the influence of some of their fellow-members. V. 12. If, however, that fact of the Gospel is denied, the whole structure of Christian preaching and Christian faith falls. V. 13. Do you firmly *believe* these three great objective facts to be historically true?

But let us look a little more carefully at Paul's statement of the primary principles of the Gospel. We have omitted something vital. Christ died. Do you believe this? Then you are believing a fact. Christ died *for*, *ὑπέρ*, *our sins*. Do you *believe* that? Then you believe not a mere historical fact, but a religious principle of paramount importance. Here is the innermost kernel, the hidden mystery, of the Gospel, its very center. If that had not been the purpose of Christ's death, then we would never have known or understood why God allowed Him to die. Among the foremost points, *ἐν πρώτοις*, there stands this precious phrase "for our sins," i. e., to atone for them. 1 John 3, 5; Gal. 1, 4; 2 Cor. 5, 15; Titus 2, 14; Heb. 5, 3; 7, 27; 1 Pet. 2, 24. "For," *ὑπέρ* = "in behalf of"; Rom. 4, 25, "for," *διά* = "on account of."

If that holds good of the death of Christ, then He was raised again on the third day *for our justification*. Rom. 4, 25. The grave was to Christ not the destined receptacle of corruption, but an apartment fitted for entering into life, Acts 2, 26—28, Christ becoming the First-fruits of them that slept, 1 Cor. 15, 20, 23. Do you *believe* this?

2.

Many people are afflicted by doubts in regard to these primary principles of the Christian Gospel, especially in regard to the resurrection of Christ, which, of course, involves our bodily resurrection. Now, there are certain considerations mentioned in our text which will, and ought to, make you firm and steadfast in your faith. Let us ask ourselves the question, Whence did this doctrine of the Gospel originate?

There are but two possibilities, yes, only two. Either this Gospel is Paul's own philosophic discovery, or it is not. The same holds true of Matthew, John, Peter, etc., whose Gospel is the same as Paul's. Passing over the impossibility of many merely human minds' producing the identical principles which we have in the Gospel, we have the express statement denying that the Gospel doctrine originated in this way. Cp. 2 Pet. 1, 16; 1 Cor. 2, 9. 11. 13; 2 Pet. 1, 20. 21a; Gal. 1, 12; Matt. 16, 17. If those who received (*έλαβον*) Jesus were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, John 1, 12. 13, then certainly the message which gave them the new birth was not of men, not corruptible seed, 1 Pet. 1, 23.

But the apostles do not only disclaim that the Gospel principles are their own intellectual products; they repeatedly and emphatically affirm that they have *received* them. Says Paul in our text, v. 3: *παρέλαβον*. From whom? From Christ, by special, direct, immediate revelation. In identical words St. Paul says of the Lord's Supper: 1 Cor. 11, 23. As the Corinthians received the Gospel truths from St. Paul, who delivered them to them, so St. Paul received them from Christ, they were delivered to him by the revelation (*δι' ἀποκαλύψεως*) of Jesus Christ. Gal. 1, 12. He emphatically negatives the idea of some of his detractors that he received the Gospel from, or was taught it by, *man*. Cf. 1 Cor. 2, 10—13; Acts 22, 17. 18; 2 Cor. 12, 1—4. For Peter's, James's, and John's cases refer to the voice from heaven at the transfiguration. Matt. 17, 5; 2 Pet. 1, 17; 1 John 1, 1—3. They were eye-and ear-witnesses of Christ's glory. And what Paul received, agreed absolutely with what the other twelve apostles had received. 1 Cor. 15, 11; see Gal. 2, 1—9. This is the doctrine of our one and only infallible text-book of religion as to the origin of the Gospel: the Gospel is a divine revelation, the manifestation of the mystery of God's will. Eph. 1, 9; Col. 1, 26. 27.

3.

The remarkable agreement of Paul's Gospel teaching with that of the other apostles is one of the strongholds of our faith. But there is still a more sure and impregnable foundation for faith to rest upon and to obtain a firm and steadfast footing.

Thousands even of Christ's enemies witnessed His death. His burial, too, had many witnesses. His resurrection, which proved dif-

ficult of belief to the Corinthians, was also far from having been "done in a corner." Acts 26, 26. Paul produces a host of witnesses: 1) Cephas, Peter, Luke 24, 34; 2) the Twelve (possibly Matthias was present, Acts 1, 22, 23), Luke 24, 33, 36; John 20, 26—29; 3) five hundred (probably the appearance on the mountain in Galilee, Matt. 26, 32; 28, 7—16), of whom the greater part remained among the then living (hence producible as witnesses); 4) James, "the brother of our Lord," called by Paul an apostle, Gal. 1, 19, a chief elder at the Jerusalem church, Acts 15, 13; 21, 18; Gal. 2, 9, 11, author of the epistle which bears his name; 5) all the apostles, Acts 1, 3, possibly including men like Andronicus and Junias, Rom. 16, 7; 6) last of all, Paul himself, Acts 9, 5; 22, 14; 26, 16, "the least of the apostles," 2 Cor. 12, 11; Eph. 3, 8. While the other apostles had been instructed three and a half years by Christ Himself and so were fully developed in their office, Paul had become an apostle in an instant, as it were, receiving his instructions by brief and *special* revelation. 1 Cor. 15, 5—9. A "great cloud of witnesses" indeed! Heb. 12, 1. Note that Paul cites witnesses (1) who were still living; (2) many of whom were commonly known by name; (3) who were too familiar with the form, face, voice, manner, and life of Jesus to be deceived. Note their sincerity.

Deceived? Why, deception is absolutely out of the question. These were all "witnesses after the fact"; but there was "a witness before the fact," a witness who had preceded the fact of Christ's resurrection *by centuries*. What witness? The impregnable Rock of the Ages, towering over the wreck of time, the imperishable Word of God, the "more sure word of prophecy," the Scriptures — *God's* witness. 1 Pet. 1, 23, 25; 2 Pet. 1, 19. How wonderfully reassuring and refreshingly confirming to our faith the words of our text now fall upon the ear: "Christ died for our sins," etc.; "according to the Scriptures," "which cannot be broken." John 10, 35.—How does the twitter and twaddle of Modernistic wiseacres, wise in their own conceit, Rom. 11, 25; 12, 16, self-conceited to the point of trying to "instruct the Lord" as to His teaching and methods, 1 Cor. 2, 16, impress you now? What of the alleged discrepancies between the Old and the New Testament? What of the supposed dissonant and diverse "theories" about the atonement? What about the alleged vagueness of Bible language? All this twitter and twaddle of the muttering morons in things spiritual vanishes as fog before the sun's penetrating rays as we grasp in faith the simple, yet profoundly comprehensive and vast words of Paul: "Christ died for our sins," etc. For the fact and meaning of His death see Is. 53, 5, 10; Dan. 9, 24—26; Ps. 22; Zech. 12, 10 (Jesus quotes Is. 53, 12 in Luke 22, 37); for the fact of His burial, Ps. 16, 9; Is. 53, 9; for the fact of His resurrection, Ps. 16, 10; Is. 53, 10; Hos. 13, 14; predicted with minuteness, even as to the day,

Jonah 1, 17b; 2, 1. 10; Hos. 6, 2. *N. B.* St. Paul puts the testimony of *Scripture* above that of those who saw the Lord after His resurrection (*Bengel*).

Conclusion. — Having heard the message of the Gospel delivered to the saints, its reception by divine revelation, the prophecies of its glorious facts in the Old Testament Scriptures, accept this Gospel, stand in it, hold fast its very wording (vv. 1. 2 of epistle); for by it only can and shall we be saved. Rom. 10, 9—11; 1, 16. — “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable,” etc. 1 Cor. 15, 58. (Hymn 312, 1.)

Los Angeles, Cal.

O. W. WISMAR.

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

2 Cor. 3, 4—11 (4—6).

Who is an able minister? This was a live issue at Corinth. 1 Cor. 1, 11. 12. St. Paul's apostolic authority and ministry were under fire. He devotes five chapters of this epistle (2 Cor.) to a description of the Christ-impelled New Testament ministry. In our text he speaks of

ABLE MINISTERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. *The work which they are to do;*
2. *The means they are to employ;*
3. *The source of their ability.*

1.

a. The ability of a minister is often measured by the crowds he attracts to his services. A congregation and its pastor, most assuredly, will not content themselves with as few people as possible to attend their services. Everything in keeping with the dignity of the Church of Jesus should be done to persuade people to attend the preaching of the Word; yet, if we gathered multitudes and entertained with religious buffoonery and three-ring circuses, we would not be accounted by the Master as His able ministers. — Neither should the ability of a minister be gaged by the way he fosters the physical, social, and secular life of his congregation. — Nor is the work of a minister of a political nature. It is not his duty as a pastor to prescribe legislation or to dictate the policies of the government.

b. The work of a minister of the New Testament is to call men out of darkness to light, from their sin to their Savior, from the life of a godless pagan to that of a godly Christian. A minister's real work must be directed to the end that men's naturally dead souls are spiritually quickened by the living faith in Christ, that they are regenerated, that they are edified in the faith, that in thought, word, and deed they walk in conformity with God's holy will, and that at the end they are eternally saved. St. Paul points to the product of his labor at Corinth in chap. 3, 1—3.

2.

- a. All human wisdom and philosophy of men, all their scientific inventions, deductions, and conclusions, no matter how brilliant, are not the means that are able to convert one sinner or bring one soul to heaven. — Not even all the Word of God is a means of grace. The bulk of sectarian preaching that is based at all on the Bible is a preaching of the Law in its various phases and applications. That was the tool the Judaizing legalists at Corinth employed. St. Paul says: "The letter killeth"; he calls this use of the Law a "ministration of death." Cf. Rom. 7, 9; 5, 20; 8, 2; Gal. 3, 10.
- b. The magna charta of the New Testament ministry is the Gospel of Christ. The Old and the New Testament: Ex. 24, 8; Is. 59, 20 f.; Jer. 31, 31—33; Matt. 26, 28; Luke 22, 20; 1 Cor. 11, 25. The quickening power of the Gospel: John 6, 63; Rom. 1, 16; Gal. 3, 2. 18, 22; 2 Tim. 3, 15; 1 Cor. 1, 21; 15, 1. 2. The efficacy of the Sacraments. St. Paul's example: 2 Cor. 5, 18—21.

"Upon the pulpit of a church in a Tyrolese village is an emblem of what the ministry should be. It is an extended arm, carved from wood, holding up the cross in the sight of all. Christ Crucified must be held up as the only atonement for sin and hope for the sinners" (*Foster*).

"An old divine preaching before the clergy anticipated their final examination with much effect. He represented the Judge asking, 'What did you preach for?' 'I preached, Lord, that I might keep a good living that was left me by my father, which, if I had not entered the ministry, would have been wholly lost to me and my family.' Christ addresses him, 'Stand by, thou hast thy reward.' The question is put to another, 'And what did you preach for?' 'Lord, I was applauded as a learned man, and I preached to keep up the reputation of an excellent orator and an ingenious preacher.' The answer of Christ to him also is, 'Stand by, thou hast had thy reward.' The Judge puts the question to a third, 'And what did you preach for?' 'Lord,' saith he, 'I neither aimed at the great things of this world, though I was thankful for the conveniences of life which Thou gavest me, nor did I preach that I might gain the character of a wit or of a man of parts or of a fine scholar, but I preached in compassion to souls and to please and honor Thee. My design, Lord, in preaching was that I might win souls to Thy blessed Majesty.' The Judge was now described as calling out, 'Room, men! Room, angels! Let this man come and sit with Me on My throne; he has owned and honored Me on earth, and I will own and honor him through all the ages of eternity'" (*Foster*).

3.

St. Paul also speaks of the necessary "sufficiency," ability, qualifications, of a minister of the New Testament. Vv. 5. 6; chap. 2, 16b.

- a. The false teachers that had crept into the congregation at

Corinth had paraded their superior ability and had disparaged St. Paul. 2 Cor. 10, 11. 12; 11, 4. 5. 13—15. 22; 12, 11; 2, 17.

b. The apostle humbly confesses his own personal inability and ascribes the source of his ability to God. "It is not that I am personally qualified to form any judgment by myself; my qualifications come from God" (*Moffat*). God dispenses spiritual gifts to every man to profit withal. 1 Cor. 12; 2, 4. 5. 7; 2 Tim. 2, 7; 1 Pet. 4, 11.

Cleveland Heights, O. _____

H. W. BARTELS.

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

GAL. 3, 15—22.

Enemies of the Bible work feverishly like gold- and diamond-diggers to find contradictions in it. They desire to show that we claim too much when we call the Bible God's own Word. In their unbelief they obstinately refuse to be guided by it. One of the most glaring contradictions which they, in their blindness, point out was mentioned in Paul's days in the country of Galatia: "Is the Law, then, against the promises of God?" The Gospel contradicts the Law, and the Law disannuls the Gospel,—that is their triumphant claim. But we shall understand that their claim is vain by weighing —

THE RELATION EXISTING BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

1. *The Law and the Gospel are not against each other.*
2. *The Law prepares the way for the Gospel.*

1.

Once more: "Is the Law, then, against the promises of God?" Very unreasonable to say that; absurd, in fact. It should be even in the opinion of men. Cp. v. 15. Human testaments may be faulty at times, yet they are treated with some regard. God set up a covenant with Abraham, v. 16, 450 years before the Law was given; is it reasonable, then, to suppose that God would set up the Law to contradict His original promise? Cp. Num. 23, 19; 2 Sam. 7, 28. And so man should leave God's testament intact.

But such doctrine is also contrary to the clear Word of God. God gave Abraham and his seed the *promise* in the one Seed Christ. The promise is the Gospel. Hence the Gospel gives. It offers and gives all the riches of grace in Christ for the salvation of mankind. This it gives to Abraham and his seed, to Adam and his posterity, and to the children of the New Testament as well. Gen. 22, 18: "all the nations." Such is God's will of grace manifested in the Gospel. V. 22b. This gift of the Gospel is embraced by faith. And because of Christ, who is the contents of true faith, man becomes the partaker of the promises given to Abraham.

Now it is contrary to Scriptures to suppose that the Law contradicts this Gospel and makes it of none effect. V. 17: "cannot disannul," etc. God says it, and so it must be true. Another reason given by God. V. 18. The Gospel promises and gives; the Law of God also, by its very nature, must demand and exact. Only if the Law could give life, then there would be a conflict between both; for then "righteousness should have been by the Law." V. 21b. Righteousness of faith and righteousness of life are both effected by the Gospel. They can never come from the Law; nor is it intended to be the source of this righteousness.

What folly to preach the Law as if by it men could be made pious and obtain eternal life! The lessons these preachers should learn and apply is stated in such simple terms in Rom. 11, 6 or Eph. 2, 8. 9 that they should stop making a gospel of the Law. Cp. v. 18. The Law cannot give life. V. 21. Its precepts may be presented in the brightest and most appealing colors. But even the loftiest conceptions of virtue brought to the attention of natural man do not, and never will, change his nature. He remains a cold corpse. No life in the Law. Natural man may bedeck himself with the beautiful trimmings of an honorable life, he may strive after the highest ideals of virtue, but without the Gospel his doings amount to nothing. The Law which he is pretending to fulfil is never fulfilled by him; and the merits which he believes to hoard up before God have no earning power whatsoever.

But there is danger at all times that we also set the Gospel and the Law against each other. If we assume that faith because it is the best of all works justifies us or that faith which worketh by love is justifying faith, then we, too, would be setting Law and Gospel against each other and would believe that there is a law which can give life and righteousness.

2.

Note the question and answer in v. 19a. What does this mean? It means that the Law serves the purpose of convincing man of his utter destitute condition on account of his sins. Natural man despises the Gospel of Jesus. It is foolishness unto him. 1 Cor. 1, 23; 2, 14. How he has hated it! How he has persecuted it! He is too proud in his own righteousness. And so the Law of God must divest him of the rags of his own righteousness and convince him of his dire poverty. How shall he find the righteousness of Christ appealing if he still rejoices in his own dirty rags?

V. 22. The sinner has to see more, *i. e.*, that he is without hope. The text says literally that the Law shuts man up, *i. e.*, like a jailer. It lodges a crushing indictment against him. Rom. 3, 10—19; 11, 32. Man is under God's wrath and condemnation. Yes, the Law convinces him that he is not only a sinner, but that he is a damned

sinner. Thus again the Law prepares the way for the acceptance of the Gospel; for the Gospel offers to him what no law can give, life and salvation.

As long as we live, the Law must keep us ever conscious of our sinfulness, of our inability to save ourselves, of our hopelessness without a Savior. Then we shall truly hunger and thirst after the righteousness of our glorious Redeemer as it is offered to us in the Gospel. Thus "the entire Law stands in a certain close relation to Christ. Far from rendering Christ superfluous or from being opposed to Him, it proves, in the last instance, nothing but the absolute necessity for a sinner of seeking salvation at the hands of Christ." B.

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

GAL. 5, 16—24 (25).

In order that we may rightly understand God's Word, we must carefully distinguish between justification and sanctification. In justification God, for Christ's sake, forgives all sins to the believer and imputes to him the whole treasure of the Savior's merits. 1 Cor. 6, 11; 2 Tim. 1, 9; 1 Pet. 2, 9. Justification is therefore instantaneous and perfect. As soon as a person believes in Christ, *all* his sins are forgiven, and he possesses the *whole* righteousness of the Redeemer. Sanctification, or renovation, however, is the restitution of the divine image in the regenerate by the operation of the Holy Ghost through the means of grace. Col. 3, 10; Eph. 4, 24; 1 Thess. 5, 23. Sanctification is neither instantaneous nor complete, but progressive and imperfect as long as we live on earth. 2 Cor. 7, 1; 1 Thess. 4, 3; 1 John 1, 8, 9. Sin remains in our corrupt body and wars against the Spirit of God. Rom. 7, 14. 15. 18. 21—25. Hence our whole Christian life is a perpetual struggle of the Spirit against the flesh. Of this struggle our text speaks. Let us consider

THE TWO POWERS CONTENDING AGAINST EACH OTHER IN THE CHRISTIAN.

Let us learn—

1. Which these two powers are; 2. How they manifest themselves;
3. What God demands of us in view of these two powers.

1.

Which these two powers are. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." Here the Holy Ghost pictures to us the two opposing powers. The flesh is our old evil nature, with which we are born, the total corruption of our whole nature, which is spiritually dead, blind, inimical to God, and inclined to everything that is sinful. John 3, 5, 6; Eph. 2, 5, 6; 4, 18; 1 Cor. 2, 14; Gen. 8, 21; Rom. 8, 7; 2 Cor. 3, 5; Gen. 6, 5. This evil nature God did not create in us,

but is is the result of man's Fall. Gen. 3, 6—10; 2, 17; Rom. 5, 12; Gen. 1, 26. 27; John 8, 44; Eph. 2, 2; Gen. 1, 31. Alas! the evil nature clings to us even after conversion. Gal. 5, 16; Rom. 8, 13; 6, 12; Ps. 19, 13; 1 Cor. 6, 18; 2 Sam. 12, 7; Rom. 7, 14—24.—However, there is another power contending in us for good, for we are Christians, regenerated by the Holy Ghost. John 3, 6; Gal. 3, 26; John 15, 3; Col. 1, 12. 13; 2, 12; Titus 3, 5—7; Rom. 6, 3. 4. Through regeneration the Holy Ghost has created in us a new man, a regenerated self, which delights in the Word of God, serves God, and is eager to please Him by good works. Eph. 2, 6. 7; John 1, 13; 1 John 3, 9; 2 Cor. 5, 17; 1 Pet. 1, 23; Jas. 1, 18; John 6, 29; Rom. 12, 2; Eph. 2, 10; Titus 2, 14; Phil. 4, 13; John 15, 5.—How wonderful is this work of the Holy Ghost! He has given us a new heart, a new spirit. 1 John 5, 4. 5; Rom. 5, 1—5.

2.

How the two powers manifest themselves. Since the *flesh* is active in us, it manifests itself in everything that is evil. First, it manifests itself as a struggle or opposition against the Holy Ghost and the new man whom He has implanted in us. Gal. 5, 17a; Rom. 7, 23. It does not wish to do what God demands. Secondly, it manifests itself in gross outbursts of its evil passions. In our text, Paul does not mention all of these, but certain characteristic and common sins which defile and destroy men, such as a) sins against the Sixth Commandment: adultery, the pollutions of the married; fornication, the vices of the unmarried; uncleanness, the unspeakable perversions which degrade man below the beast, such as sodomy and other crimes against nature; lasciviousness, gross sensuality and voluptuousness in word, deed, gestures, pictures, filthy books, etc. (let the pastor warn earnestly against the sexual vices of our time); b) sins against the First Table, as idolatry, both gross and fine, and witchcraft, as Spiritualism with all the kindred horrors, by which degraded men worship the devil; c) sins against the Fifth and the Eighth Commandment, as "hatred, . . . murders." These sins destroy Christian love and cause ruin in home, church, and state; d) sins against common decency and propriety, as drunkenness, gluttony, etc., which again foment and cause other horrible vices.—Is this picture overdrawn? Certainly not. Are these sins found among Christians? Alas, only too often! And even if the gross outbursts are suppressed, the heart is full of iniquities. But if the fruits are so evil, how much more evil must the tree be! Even unregenerate man must be ashamed of his evil nature; how much more the regenerate!—However, through faith there is active in the Christian also the new man, led by the Spirit of God. This spirit, or new man, shows itself, first, in constant opposition to the evil nature. It loathes sin and earnestly desires to do good, Gal. 5, 17. Secondly, it manifests itself in virtuous deeds and qualities, which please God. Gal. 5, 22. 23. (Let the pastor apply

these and show their beauty, illustrating them by examples.) How wonderful our homes and our churches would be if these virtues were found bountifully in them! Let us consider them constantly to strive after them.

3.

What God demands of us in view of these two powers contending against each other in us. a) The works of the flesh being an abomination, they result in eternal damnation; faith cannot exist if the flesh reigns. Gal. 5, 21b. Since, however, God desires our salvation, He demands that we suppress our evil nature and its deceitful lusts. Col. 3, 9; Eph. 4, 22, 25; Rom. 6, 12—14; 1 Pet. 2, 11; 2 Tim. 2, 22; Gal. 5, 24; 2 Cor. 7, 1. This is done through daily contrition and repentance. Rom. 6, 4, 11. And as we put off the old man together with his lusts, we should b) put on the new man, who is created after God in true righteousness and holiness. Gal. 5, 25; 5, 16; 2 Pet. 3, 18; Rom. 12, 2; Phil. 1, 9; John 15, 10, 11; Titus 2, 14; 1 John 2, 3, 4; 3, 24; Phil. 2, 5; John 13, 15; Titus 3, 8, 14. A Christian must therefore daily exercise his faith and walk before God, striving after perfection. To this end he must use the Word of God, both the Law, to see his sins, and the Gospel, as the power which frees from sin. Rom. 1, 16; Eph. 5, 10. And since of himself he cannot do anything, he must continue in prayer, asking God to grant him the Holy Spirit to guide him into all truth and to preserve him from all evil, keeping in mind the glorious salvation which God has prepared for him in heaven and which is eternal, incorruptible, and unspeakably glorious. Phil. 2, 13; Matt. 6, 12; Phil. 1, 6; 3, 12; Eph. 4, 13; 2 Cor. 4, 16; 1 John 3, 2, 3. May God, then, grant us His Holy Spirit that we crucify our flesh with its deceitful lusts, follow after holiness, be zealous of good works, and keep in remembrance Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith! John 10, 27, 28.

St. Louis, Mo.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER.

Book Review.

Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., offers:—

Concordance to Ev. Luth. Hymn-Book. By E. Eckhardt. 220 pages, $6\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{5}{8}$. Price, \$2.25.

A concordance is always valuable, a memory help and a time-saver. But some concordances have been prepared with such skill and care that they are very valuable and indispensable. Our pastors who are compelled to use our hymn-book for more reasons than one will take for granted that a concordance prepared by Pastor Eckhardt will be a real help to them in their work. The author, in a preface, carefully explains how his concordance will best serve the interests of the pastor. To illustrate, we find under the word "grace" seven groups indicating in which connections the word is found; thus, for example, "of," "by," "through," etc. 39,000 key-

words had to be taken into account and arranged and rearranged before the book was ready for the printer. The author's laborious patience will be amply repaid by a frequent use of his concordance. A list of hymns for the epistle and gospel pericopes, compiled from the hymn-book by Pastor Wm. Lochner, is appended.

B.

The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel. Thirty-nine Evening Lectures by Dr. C. F. W. Walther. Reproduced from the German edition of 1897 by W. H. T. Dau. 426 pages, $6\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$. Price, \$2.50.

Dr. Walther is so eminently known by large numbers who have never seen him that this translation of his lectures on a most vital subject of theology will increase his admirers by leaps and bounds, especially among those who do not command the language in which these lectures were delivered. Dr. Dau's ability as a writer, translator, critic, and theologian is a matter of common knowledge and an invitation to purchase this book of such deep significance, which the translator has enhanced by a preface and introduction worthy, no doubt, of the reader's attention. Finally, another skilful hand has contributed to the value of this precious book, as a glance at the indexes by Pastor E. Eckhardt will prove. The very first one, grouped under the following headings: "Law and Gospel," "The Difference," "Division of Law and Gospel," "Confounding of Law and Gospel," with their numerous references, will convince any one at first inspection to which good use this index can be put in sermon-making. The German edition contains no index. The printer's efforts are so excellent that the reader will find it a real pleasure to scan these pages. God bless the mission of this book, which treats that doctrine which must be carefully weighed and studied during a whole lifetime!

B.

Statistical Year-Book of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1928. Price, \$1.00.

Reports of presidents, parochial reports, gain and loss with regard to language, value of church property, missions, educational institutions, Church Extension funds, Board of Support, charitable institutions, societies, financial report, United States church census report for 1926 — these are some of the items prominently mentioned in the table of contents, showing the value of this publication. The statistics on missions alone cover thirteen pages, ample material to offer reliable information regarding our missions to our congregations. A dictionary interprets a language; the *Year-book* interprets the work of our Synod.

B.

The Life-Work of Johann Sebastian Bach. Lecture under the Auspices of the Lyceum Committee of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. By Paul Sauer, president of the Chicago Bach Chorus. Price, 10 cts. the copy; dozen, 96 cts.

We have here not a mere biographical sketch along encyclopedic lines, but an evaluation of Bach's music, principally his cantatas. Enough is said and well said to warm the reader's heart for the subject. On page 8, line 14 from below, read "serene" instead of "severe."

B.

Dreizehnter Synodalbericht des Süd-Illinois-Distrikts der Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt zu Collingsville, Ill., vom 10. bis zum 16. October 1928. Preis: 20 Cts.

Dieser Bericht enthält nur das Geschäftliche.

B.

Three Funeral Songs. Edited by Walter Wismar. Price, 10 cts.

The first is a translation into English of *Harre, meine Seele*; the second, "Who Knows How Near My End May Be," the music by Peter Huxthal; the third, "Whatever God Ordains Is Good," the music by Samuel Rodigast, harmonized by J. S. Bach.

B.

Record Sheet for Graded Memory Course: Primary, First, and Second Year. Price, @ 16 cts.

Graded Memory Course Cards. 12 to an envelope, 4 cts.; 12 envelopes, 35 cts.; 500 cards, \$1.00; 1,000 cards, \$1.80.

Covers to Primary Leaflets. 5 cts.; dozen, 35 cts.; 100, \$2.34.

This handy and serviceable Sunday-school material should be carefully inspected by our pastors and leaders in the schools. They appear to meet a real need.

B.

Siebster Synodalbericht des Alberta- und British Columbia-Distrikts der Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt zu Edmonton, Alta., Can., vom 18. bis zum 24. Juli 1928.

Ein Geschäftsbericht dieses Distrikts.

B.

Im Verlag des Schriftenvereins (E. Klärner), Zwidau, ist erschienen:

Der kleine Katechismus Luthers — ein Kleinod unserer Kirche. Festschrift zum Katechismusjubiläum von D. Georg Mezger. Preis: M. 1.

Folgende drei Hauptteile werden in dieser Schrift ausgeführt: „1. Wie der kleine Katechismus entstanden ist; 2. Der Inhalt des kleinen Katechismus; 3. Zweck und Bedeutung des kleinen Katechismus.“ Wir wünschen dieser Schrift die weiteste Verbreitung.

B.

Die Hausapotheke. Ein kurzes Wort zum Katechismusjubiläum. Von M. Willkomm. Preis: 10 Pf.; 25 Stück: M. 2; 50: M. 3.50; 100: M. 6; 500: M. 20; 1,000: M. 30.

Wie die obige, so ist auch diese Schrift sehr preiswürdig und sehr zu empfehlen. Es gibt noch viele Glieder in unsern Gemeinden, die lieber in deutscher als in englischer Sprache von den großen Taten Gottes hören und lesen. Man mache sie auf beide Schriften aufmerksam.

B.

Der erste Brief an die Thessalonicher. Ausgelegt von D. C. M. Born. Preis: M. 1.50.

Die Schriften D. Borns sind wohlbekannt und werden auch gerne gelesen, da sie in schlichter und klarer Sprache die ewigen Heilswoahrheiten vortragen. Was wir von dem vorliegenden Büchlein gelesen haben, nötigt uns, es andern zur Lektüre anzupreisen.

B.

Jugendarbeit der Pastoren als Seelsorge an der konfirmierten Jugend. Von Dr. P. Peters. Preis: M. 50.

Die Sorge um die Jugend seitens des Pastors ist nicht erschöpft in der Pflege des Gesellschaftslebens, sondern fordert seelosorgerische, das heißt, erzieherische, Tätigkeit seinerseits. Darum ist auch ein etwaiger Jugendverein nicht als ein bloßes notwendiges Übel anzusehen, denn sich der Pastor mit einem gewissen erkennbaren Zwang widmen muß. Die Gedanken, die in dieser Schrift ausgeführt werden, haben uns so zugesagt, daß wir alle Pastoren herzlich ermuntern, sich damit vertraut zu machen.

B.

The Evening Sacrifice. Nine groups of sermons for the evening service by the Rev. Edward W. Schramm. Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O. 450 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8$, neatly bound. Price, \$2.50. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

To read a sermon volume of 450 pages for purposes of review is, under our working conditions, hardly feasible and would involve too late a date for any announcement, whether favorable or unfavorable, to serve either publisher or prospective buyers. We might adopt the expedient of read-

ing one or two sermons, but dread the comparison with the Athenian referred to by Plato who was selling a house and carried a brick around as a sample. Now, then, we have not read this volume, but will tell you something about it. It is a collection of 45 "popular" sermons for the evening service. The church-year gives the general subject for 18 sermons, covering Christmas, Epiphany, and Lent. The rest are topical in treatment: "Sermons from Nature," "Spiritual Diseases and Their Cure," "Sermons on Stewardship," "Sermons on Missions," "The Christian and Afflictions," and "Gems from the Psalms." There is a tendency to sensationalism in such topics as "A Coated Tongue" and "Infected Eyes" in the series treating "Spiritual Diseases," but we hope no one will decide against purchasing the book on account of these isolated examples of bad taste. We note that other reviewers have praised the freshness and pointedness of these messages. One reviewer at least declares that the author is a good homiletician.

G.

Luther and the Reformation. By *James Mackinnon, Ph. D., D. D.*, Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, University of Edinburgh. Vol. III: Progress of the Movement (1521-29). Longmans, Green & Co., New York. Price, \$6.40. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

Volumes I and II, by the same author, have not been reviewed, but they have been read by us, and we felt at the time that Mackinnon's presentation of Luther and his work commands the attention of all lovers of the great events of the Reformation. We dare say that his books are among the best on this special phase of history. Volume III is on a level with the foregoing ones, although we found here what we expected to find, a rather unsatisfactory and antbiblical evaluation of Luther's stand in his controversy with Zwingli and his kind concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. We were very much disturbed to meet the rather shopworn claim that Luther and the Lutheran Church teach consubstantiation, all the more so, since this egregious blunder has been brought to the author's attention by a reviewer of his earlier volumes. Mackinnon's rebuke is undeserved when he says Luther refused "to give the hand of fellowship to the Swiss in spite of a difference of opinion on a question of exegesis." Nor do we believe Mackinnon and H. Boehmer when they say that Luther borrowed the terms for his doctrine "from the scholastic theology (Occam and Biel) in which, unlike Zwingli, he was an expert." Luther at that time had by far outgrown that garment of his days of spiritual ignorance. He now walked about donned in the full panoply of God's Word. Hence not much weight will be attached to the remark that Luther "was more impressed by some of his [Zwingli's] arguments than he cared to own." Space does not permit us to say all we should like to say, and so we would finally encourage our readers to purchase and read this valuable history. Another volume will complete the set. After all, the best history on the Reformation that has ever been penned or ever will be penned is Luther's complete works. Read them and form your own opinion.

B.

Princes of the Christian Pulpit and Pastorate. By *Harry Clay Howard*. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. Price, \$2.50.

This is the second series of biographies by the author. It consists of twelve studies in the lives and times of Bernard of Clairvaux, Luther, Baxter, Chalmers, Newman, Beecher, Liddon, Dale, Hughes, Galloway, Paget, Buckley. The book is interestingly written. It is not true, however, that Luther "left a permanent stain on his name in the matter of his attitude toward the Peasants' War" and that "likewise in the matter of the bigamy of Philip of Hesse he was not blameless." Such conclusions

can be reached only where the facts in the case are either not known or not given due consideration. According to the author, Zwingli displayed the better temper at Marburg, while Cardinal Newman's apostasy is rather defended. This unionistic spirit pervades the entire book and mars the enjoyment of its well-written pages, which acquaint us with several preachers and pastors comparatively unknown. TH. LAETSCH.

The Origin of Paul's Religion. The James Sprunt Lectures, delivered at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. By *J. Gresham Machen, D. D.*, Assistant Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis in Princeton Theological Seminary. The Macmillan Company, New York. 329 pages, $6 \times 8\frac{3}{4}$. Cloth binding. Price, \$2.50. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, commanding such great attention to-day, is a representative of a naturalistic philosophy; it subjects the holiest of our treasures to its rationalistic methods and judges them according to its rationalistic axioms. For the historical Jesus this school has an answer, likewise for the greatest of the messengers of the Gospel of Jesus, Paul of Tarsus; but its findings are far from satisfying for him who reads aright the four gospels, the Pauline epistles, the Acts of St. Luke, and the other writings of the New Testament. Machen knows the methods of this historical school. He frankly and bravely meets their arguments in a logical and most thoroughgoing manner. He investigates the claims of F. C. Baur and his Tuebingen School, of Ritschl and his followers, of von Harnack, of Bousset and men of his type. This book contains much valuable apologetic matter, is full of source material, is convincing throughout.

B.

Deeds Done for Christ. By *Sir James Marchant*. Harper & Bros. 1928. XII and 335 pages. Price, \$2.50. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

"Deeds are done daily for Christ," says the author in the foreword. "Some little deeds—the cup of cold water; others great deeds—the sacrifice of life's fairest prospects for a forlorn hope.... From the vast records of these deeds done for Christ has been gathered the following." This is not an original work, but a compilation from numerous publications, to which credit is given on the last two pages. The term "for Christ" is rather stretched sometimes, being used somewhat like a synonym for courageous personal conviction under pressure or for self-denial in the service of suffering mankind. Nevertheless, the forty-six articles make inspirational reading. Male and female martyrs of the first centuries and "British stalwarts" of the Reformation period; the founding of the British Sunday-school; Mrs. Butler's fight against the social evil; Father Dolling's work for the boys; Howard's work for prison reform; thirty-one missionaries' work, including Father Damien's labor for the lepers and Jesuit work in Paraguay (nineteenth century), and Sadhu Sunder Singh. Of course, we find old acquaintances: Carey, Martyn, Taylor, Livingstone, Mackay, Paton. There is hardly an orthodox person in the book; yet, what a lesson the conservative Lutherans in Germany might learn from Thomas Chalmers's organizing of the Scottish Free Church; what fine examples for able Christians to ameliorate social conditions without "socializing the Gospel" do we find when we look about! All about us there is zeal for mission in foreign fields, a good deal of it, in this book. If pastors read it, they should not merely note this or that episode for future sermon illustration, but, like everybody else, they should allow it to be the channel through which the Spirit makes the Word render them also doers of deeds for Christ.

R. W. H.

